

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Replace the paragraph beginning on page 1, line 6 with the following:

The present invention is directed to a folder for use in conjunction with a device for sorting documents, and more particularly directed to a sorting folder for use with a sorting device such as disclosed in WO 98/20462, now U.S. Patent No. 6,341,700. Additionally, the present invention is directed to a folder and method of use for delivery point packaging of mail in an automated or manual mail sorting and delivery operation.

Replace the paragraph beginning on page 1, line 20 with the following:

One manual sorting device is disclosed in WO 98/20462, now U.S. Patent No. 6,341,700, issued to Soderstrom, and incorporated by reference herein. The Soderstrom device relates to sorting documents, mail and the like, which device is designed for arranging the documents in a bundle with a desired order between the documents. In post offices, in mail departments of companies, institutions, government agencies and the like, there is a need for a efficient approach to handling large quantities of mail. The Soderstrom device addresses a need for efficient processing items of mail or other documents so that the items may be distributed to the addressee in a labor-saving way. However, the Soderstrom device is not without limitations. For example, relatively light items placed within the partitions of the device may in some circumstances be separated from associated mail during a controlled fall process. In this regard, the separated items need to be manually reinserted in correct association with the sorted mail. Additionally, it would be desirable to efficiently capture sorted items into a delivery point package for subsequent delivery.

Replace the paragraph beginning on page 2, line 8 with the following:

The present invention relates to a folder device for use in conjunction with a sorting device. The sorting device for use with the folder device may assume a variety of configurations. In one embodiment, the sorting device may be the Soderstrom device of WO 98/20462, now U.S. Patent

No. 6,341,700. A sorting process with alternative sorting devices may also benefit from aspects of the present invention.

Replace the paragraph starting on page 3, line 21 with the following:

Conventional sorting cabinets for items of documents or mail comprise compartments for sorting the items in a certain order of distribution, e.g. street address or room number. The items are sorted into the compartments, and are then removed and gathered in bundles for distribution within, for example, a postal district or delivery route. The Soderstrom device 10 aims at providing a sorting device which facilitates the bundling of the sorted items by providing means for emptying the sorting compartments in such a way as to automatically bundle the items in sorted order. Figure 1 shows, in a top plan view, an embodiment of the Soderstrom device 10 for sorting items 1 comprising a frame 2, in which partitions 3 are arranged in a spaced relationship, forming a number of compartments or sorting compartments 4. The partitions 3 are fixedly or removably arranged on the rear section or rear element 5 connected to the frame 2, the partitions extend substantially parallel with respect to each other. In the embodiment shown in Figure 1, the partitions are bent so that, in a horizontal plane, they will extend in an oblique direction with respect to the frame 2. Extending below the partitions 133, spaced apart from their lower edges, is a horizontal plate member which forms the bottom 6 of the sorting compartments 4. The bottom member 6 is withdrawable from the frame in the direction of arrow P, and displaceable with respect to the partitions 3 in a direction P which deviates from the direction in which said partitions extend. The dot-dash line shows the bottom member in a withdrawn or displaced position. Slidable guide means, e.g. guide rails, not illustrated, are arranged in the frame to act as bearing means to allow for the displacement of the bottom member 6. Figure 6 illustrates the bottom member 6 partially withdrawn from the frame 2. In another embodiment (not shown), the partitions 133 are movably supported upon the frame 2 and are displaceable relative to a stationary bottom 166. In that embodiment, the partitions 13-3 are extended away from the stationary bottom 16-6 during the controlled felling operation.

Replace the paragraph starting on page 4, line 19 with the following:

Figure 2 shows, in a view similar to that of Figure 1, another embodiment of the Soderstrom device 10 for sorting items. The device 10 has straight partitions 13 extending mainly at right angles in relation to the frame 12, and which run parallel with respect to each other, thus forming a number of sorting compartments 14. The partitions 13 include a leading edge 15, which in this embodiment is a generally linear shape. Alternative leading edge 15 configurations would also be practicable. The partitions 13 are arranged in the frame 12 by suitable means as described above. The bottom 6 of the sorting compartments is arranged on slidable guiding means (not shown) extending obliquely with respect to the frame 10, in order to be displaced in a direction P which deviates from the general direction in which the partitions 13 extend. The dot-dash line indicates the bottom ~~16-6~~ withdrawn from the frame.

Replace the paragraph starting on page 5, line 26 with the following:

In another envisioned use, a folder 30 may be used within each of the sorting compartments 14 and used to separate the items 32 from adjacent compartments 14. In this manner, the folders 30 may provide discrete mail packets associated with each of the address locations. Yet another benefit of the folder 30 used in conjunction with the Soderstrom sorting device 10 is the facilitation of sorted document removal from between the partitions 13. Without use of the folder 30, and particularly with substantially full sorting compartments, some light documents may be suspended away from the ~~drawer-bottom~~ 6 and be frictionally held by the partition 13 walls as the ~~drawer-bottom~~ 6 is extended and be separated from the associated mail items. As an additional step, these separated items then need to be manually replaced within the sorted order of items. By placing a folder 30 in the compartment(s) 14 prior to the sorting process, items 32 can be inserted and held within the folder 30.

Replace the paragraph starting on page 7, line 25 with the following:

As presented in the intermediate illustration of FIG. 7, the dividers 30 may be inverted to capture mail items 32 within the associated subgrouping 52. The inversion process may be a manual process by a mail sorter, or may be via an automated process. In a manual process, each

subgrouping 52 of mail 32 along with its associated folder divider 30 is withdrawn from the ~~sorting device 10~~ sorted mail grouping and the folder 30 is inverted around the subgrouping 52 to partially encompass the mail items 32. As illustrated in FIG. 7, a delivery point package 50 is created by this process.

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